

From: Nicholas Dronen
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/15/02 11:03am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sir or Madam:

I make my living as a computer programmer and work with Microsoft products every day. I believe the proposed Microsoft settlement will not prevent the company from continuing to act as it has in the past. The U.S. government has had agreements with Microsoft in the past, and they have had little effect.

I assert that allowing this or that hardware vendor to put such-and-such icon on the desktop of a Microsoft operating system does little or nothing to prevent the company from using its monopoly of the desktop operating system market to insinuate itself in a rather forthright way into other markets.

Moreover, I fail to see how allowing interested parties to examine the source code of some Microsoft software will solve this problem. At most such a regime will give some well-funded start-up companies and successful competitors of Microsoft (that is, those firms which can afford to send a software engineer to Redmond to spend time reading code) a useful tidbit of information here and there.

Since the company's positions in its current markets (and some future ones as well) have not diminished (rather, they have continued to increase market share), it is clear that the company now has even less of an incentive to follow antitrust law than it did before.

Whether Microsoft should merely be punished for its role in the fate of Netscape Communications, Inc., is debatable. I personally think it is irrelevant and that the important matter is to restore equity in competition in the computer industry now and into the future. The proposed settlement does not ensure this; therefore, it should be rejected.

Kind Regards,

Nicholas Dronen
ndronen@frii.com
Computer Programmer
Boulder, Colorado

